

Remarks

Claims 1-24 were pending in the application. Claims 1-3, 8, 9, 11-13, 20, 22, and 24 were rejected. Claims 4-7, 10, 14-19, 21, and 23 were objected to. Claims 1 and 2 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 3, 4, 10, 14, 21, and 24 are amended. Claims 25 and 26 are added. Claims 3-26 are now pending. Claims 1, 10, 14, and 21 are the independent claims. Reconsideration of the amended application is respectfully requested.

The examiner objected to the drawings as not showing every feature of the claimed invention. In particular, the examiner noted that a “housing able to receive the body of said instrument” as recited in claim 1 was not shown in the drawings. As noted by the examiner, the support means define contact areas, not a housing. Accordingly, independent claims 4, 10, 14, and 21 are amended to recite contact areas rather than a housing. The contact areas are shown in the drawings, for example, as indicated by reference numeral 4. The objection, therefore, should be withdrawn.

The examiner rejected claim 14 under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite, due to a noted informality. Claim 14 is amended to address the issue noted by the examiner. The rejection, therefore, should be withdrawn.

The examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Ladao. The examiner also rejected claims 8 and 9 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ladao, in view of Smith; claims 11, 12, 20, and 22 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ladao, in view of Smith, and further in view of Yu; claims 13 and 23 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ladao, in view of

Smith and Yu, and further in view of Hsieh; and claim 24 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ladao, in view of Schoenig. The examiner also objected to claims 4-7, 10, 14-19, and 21 as depending from a rejected base claim, but acknowledged that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 4 is rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of base claim 1 and intervening claim 2, which are canceled. Claims 5-7 depend from claim 4, and claim 3 is amended to depend from claim 4. Claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 3, claim 11 depends from claim 9, claims 12 and 13 depend from claim 8, claim 20 depends from claim 12, and claims 22 and 23 depend from claim 20. Claim 24 is amended to depend from claim 4. The objection to claims 4-7 and the rejection of claims 3, 8, 9, 11-13, 20, and 22-24, therefore, should be withdrawn.

Claim 10 is rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of base claim 1 and intervening claims 2, 3, 8, and 9. The objection to claim 10, therefore, should be withdrawn. New claim 25 recites the features of claim 24 and depends from claim 10.

Claim 14 is rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of base claim 1 and intervening claims 2, 3, 8, and 12. Claims 15-19 depend from claim 14. The objection to claims 14-19, therefore, should be withdrawn. New claim 26 recites the features of claim 24 and depends from claim 14.

Claim 21 is rewritten in independent form, including all of the features of base claim 1 and intervening claims 2, 3, 8, 12, and 20. The objection to claim 21, therefore, should be withdrawn.

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that all objections and rejections have been overcome. It is therefore requested that the Amendment be entered, the claims allowed, and the case passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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